



Organizations have a legal responsibility to control substances hazardous to health in the workplace, and to prevent and adequately control employees' exposure to those substances. The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to provide and maintain a safe working environment, so far as is reasonably practicable.

As far as breathing apparatus is concerned there is a requirement to have RPE that is matched to the hazard, to the individual wearer, to the task and to the environment and also the issue of ensuring that this on-going practice includes the maintenance checks that need to be conducted and recorded on a regular basis.

Work activities may result in harmful substances contaminating the air in the form of dust, mist, vapour, gas or fume. Workers may also need to work in areas where oxygen levels are or may become low, for example: confined spaces, such as a trench, silo or tank. RPE (Respiratory Protective Equipment) and EBA (Escape Breathing Apparatus is a particular type of PPE (personal protective equipment) designed to protect the wearer from breathing in harmful substances or from oxygen-deficient atmospheres when other controls are either not possible or insufficient on their own.

Under the law, RPE is the last line of protection and cannot protect the wearer and if it is used incorrectly, or is poorly maintained, it is unlikely to provide the required protection. The additional challenge is that RPE can be uncomfortable to wear and may interfere with work, which can lead to incorrect use.

### **Solving the Problem**

Centrica Energy's Health and Safety Team identified that the compressed air escape sets, because of the face fit testing and training together with the cylinder maintenance, were time consuming and costly to manage, and in practical terms the sets were also cumbersome and awkward for users.

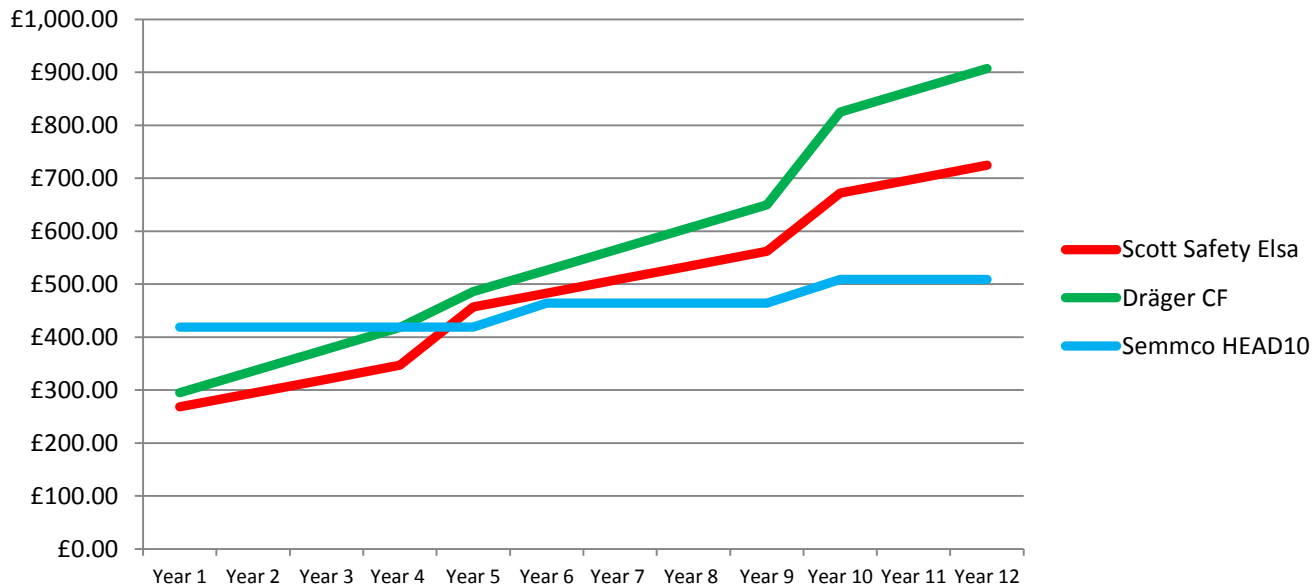
So when Shaun O'Connor, Operations Technician at Centrica Energy South Humber Bank, saw the Semenco LPS HEAD10 escape set he instantly recognized advantages that the design facilitated over and above the traditional systems.

Shaun O'Connor, Station stated "Once we had compared the HEAD10 to our previous escape breathing apparatus the time saving and less cumbersome design made it a very appealing respiratory device. We do not intend to ever use this apparatus but if we did, I have full confidence in the simplicity in the use of this device offering a safe and efficient escape"

### The Benefits

With no face fit testing and a minimal training programme making the donning of the apparatus very easy to remember in an emergency, the automatic and immediate oxygen supply, together with the alarm system means that users can be confident of a quick and efficient escape.

From an on-going control regime perspective the fact that there is no maintenance other than a visual check keeps the time and cost down, so much so that Centrica’s research speaks for itself:



Shaun O’Connor, Operations Technician at Centrica Energy South Humber Bank Station stated:

*“Once we had compared the HEAD10 to our previous escape breathing apparatus the cost saving and less cumbersome design made it a very appealing respiratory device. We do not intend to ever use this apparatus but if we did I have full confidence in the simplicity in the use of this device offering a safe and efficient escape”*

